

REF: 401 CHOOSING A CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEM

This sheet is designed to help you select the heating system best suited to your home. In the average home almost all the fuel (80%) is used for heating and hot water. The cost of keeping warm can vary considerably depending on the fuel, fuel supplier, and type of house and occupiers' lifestyle. A typical 3-bedroom house in Scotland will cost £446 per year to keep warm with gas, £759 with 'off-peak' electric storage heating and £1280 with room heaters on standard domestic electricity. (Source: - Sutherland Associates, October 2001).

GAS

Gas is burned in a boiler to heat water, which is pumped through pipes to radiators. The radiators release heat to keep rooms at a chosen temperature. The boiler also provides domestic hot water. Gas boilers require regular servicing to remain in safe working order. Gas is not usually installed in multi-storey blocks.

Advantages - Gas is generally the cheaper fuel for central heating. Gas is easily controlled and is flexible to use - the timer/programmer can be set to provide heating and hot water only when required. Gas gives a quick response and is clean to use. Gas back boilers also have a fire giving direct heat and a focal point. There is no need for a hot water tank with a combi boiler system.

Disadvantages - Generally a flue is needed to expel burnt gases. Extra space may be required for the boiler. The system has a boiler pump requiring small amounts of electricity for its operation. The system also requires annual servicing by a corgi-registered installer.

ELECTRICITY

Storage heaters store up heat during charge times. Heat is then released gradually into the room. All new Council storage-heating systems are Hydro Electric's Total Heating Total Control Package - this provides a minimum charge of 5 hours and a maximum of 12 hours (6 hours at night, 2 hours each afternoon and an evening charge depending on outside temperatures). Water is heated automatically for 3 hours at night and 2 hours each afternoon. These times vary with outside temperatures and are controlled automatically by a teleswitch. **All electricity for heating and hot water is charged at 4.13p per unit - 24 hours a day. All other electrical appliances and lights are charged at a unit price of 7.88p. Prices are Scottish Hydro Electric and include 5% VAT. The standing charge is 26.73 p/day.**

Advantages - Available not geographically restricted. May provide lower running costs than other electric heaters or fires. Easily installed. No storage for fuel required. No need for chimney or flue. Quiet operation.

Disadvantages - Storage heaters require manual adjustments to the heat input control to suit the next day's weather. They have a slower response time than a gas radiator system. To keep the heat in, homes need to be well insulated and draught free. Storage heaters may need to be left on continuously; otherwise they will not store sufficient heat to keep rooms warm throughout the day. Storage heater charge periods may vary.

To find out if there are any grants available to install new central hearing contact:

Duty Energy Advisor - Aberdeen & NE
SCARF Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
1 Cotton Street, Aberdeen
Phone 01224 213005 or 0800 512012

Duty Energy Advisor - Tayside
SCARF Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
Balgray Place, Dundee
Phone 01382 833490 or 0800 512012

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Mission Statement

SCARF aims to work through partnership to promote sustainable use of energy, eradicate fuel poverty and create sustainable employment and training opportunities.

Core Objectives

- + To provide free impartial and accessible energy efficiency advice and information services to help save energy, save cash and help save the environment.
- + To encourage investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy measures and grant take up for property improvements to achieve affordable warmth.
- + To create sustainable employment and training opportunities.

SCARF Provides

One Stop Energy Advice Shop offers free impartial advice and information:

- + Energy efficiency in the home, business and the community
- + Renewable energy in the home, business and the community
- + Grants for loft and cavity wall insulation
- + Grants for draughtproofing
- + Grants for central heating
- + Grants for renewable energy installations
- + Paying for fuel and fuel suppliers
- + Choice and operation of heating and hot water systems

SCARF also offers:

- + Home visits
- + Home energy checks
- + Presentations and informal training
- + NVQ and City & Guilds Qualifications



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

